



CITY OF GAITHERSBURG  
Gaithersburg Book Festival Committee  
February 23, 2012

---

**In Attendance:** Jud Ashman, Heidi Bishop, Sheila Bouley, Stephanie Brant, Laura Burns, Carolyn Crosby, Robin Ferrier, Jacquie Hogan, Garine Isassi, Jo Ellen Kuney, Becky Meloan, Bob Murphy, Jennifer Nicholson, Gail Norris, Karen O'Keefe, Laura Rowles, Leslie Shapiro, Gene Taft, Nansie Wilde, Fern Wolt

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

**I. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:**

Welcome & Introductions

Jud Ashman welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for their time and dedication to the Book Festival. He enthusiastically reported that we have the majority of the Featured Authors confirmed and with the addition of the Local Spot Light we will have a few more authors than last year. It is now time to get into "marketing mode" and he encouraged everyone to "talk up" the Festival among friends and colleagues.

**II. UPDATES:**

**Sponsors** – At this time Jud has reached out to all 2011 Sponsors and the majority have confirmed that they will sponsor the festival again and a few of them are coming back at a higher level. The checks should be coming in soon.

Carolyn Crosby and Nansie Wilde confirmed Whole Foods as an In-Kind Sponsor. This year Whole Foods will host the Coffee House, sell ready-made food, donate the food for the Authors Reception, and donate 1,000 bags with the Whole Foods and Gaithersburg Book Festival logos.

**Website** – The website continues to be updated and minor glitches are being corrected. The Featured Author page has had a major upgrade and is now able to be sorted by genre. The site, particularly the Blog, is getting a lot of traffic. Jud will continue to work on the pictures and video.

**Authors –**

Author Recruitment – As stated in the opening remarks Jud, Becky and Gene are confirming the final Featured Authors. Becky Meloan provided a list of over 40 new confirmed authors which brings our total to 59 Confirmed Featured Authors. The Author Committee will research PR leads that are available through the authors and will identify the leads to Gail and Robin.

Speaker Panels – Gene Taft has scheduled one Speaker Panel at this time. The Panel will discuss "The Future of the Book in Bookstores."

Author Reception – Fern Wolt and Laura Rowles were happy to report that Carolyn and Nansie were able to obtain a donation from Whole Foods to provide the food for the Author's Reception. Laura is working with Pinky and Pepe in the Kentlands to provide the beer and wine and Fern has spoken with Becky Prichard about providing music. The committee is discussing the possibility of recruiting volunteers to assist with serving, set-up and clean-up of the Reception. The committee is looking into linens and other table requirements.

**Workshops** – Heidi Bishop has identified 10 workshops and is allowing up to 90 minutes per workshop. She has confirmed two workshops with Writopia "College Admissions Essays: What's Your Story" and "Kids Writing Collaboratively." She had two proposals from JHU. The first proposal, "Writing Flash Fiction" was discussed and accepted by the Committee. The second proposal, "Writing About Trauma", generated a lot of discussion and the conclusion was for Heidi to ask if JHU has another suggestion or if they could re-word the workshop to make it more inviting to potential students. Heidi is going to work with Jennifer Nicholson to see if she can also confirm a children's poetry workshop with an instructor who has come to Gaithersburg Elementary.

Carolyn has spoken with Writopia and they will be an In-Kind Sponsor and donate all instructors and materials required for their workshops.

**Volunteers -** Volunteers are starting to sign up and Stephanie Brant is happy with the mix between teenagers and adults. She has advertised the need for volunteers through the MC Schools and even through the MC School administration. Gail and Robin will send out FB posts and Tweets, reminding people to check out the website and sign up to volunteer. Sheila has consolidated the list of potential volunteers from last year's surveys and will contact the 60+ people to get a commitment for this year.

**Children's Village** – Sheila Bouley is working with Jennifer Nicholson to coordinate the activities and performances in the Children's Village. They have lots of emails and messages out to potential In-Kind Sponsors to bring Children's activities and mini-workshops. As activities are confirmed, they will be listed on the website and included in the Monthly Newsletter.

**Fundraiser** – Jo Ellen Kuney and Stephanie Brant will coordinate the Fundraiser at Dogfish-Head restaurant. The Fundraiser is scheduled for Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5-10pm and Dogfish-Head will donate 10% of the proceeds to the Book Festival. There is a suggestion to also offer a raffle for signed copies of books and/or an invitation to attend the Author's Reception.

Jo Ellen also suggested a second smaller fundraiser in either a local home or other intimate setting to come and meet an author over coffee and cookies. The event would require a small donation to the Book Festival.

### **Marketing and PR –**

High School Writing Contest – Last minute submissions are coming in and the Committee will begin their review of the short stories very soon. Jennifer Nicholson will assist Robin and Gail in the first tier review and Brad Parks has agreed to join the committee for the second tier review.

General- Robin Ferrier and Gail Norris reported that there has been "lots of interest" in the Gaithersburg Book Festival. *Washingtonian Magazine* will feature the Gaithersburg Book Festival in its "Hidden Gems" feature next month. *Montgomery Magazine* is writing an article about the authors from Montgomery County. And the Book Festival will be advertised in *Applause* at Strathmore and distributed at all of their shows in March and April. Additionally, *Washingtonian.com* will feature GBF in an e-blast scheduled for the week of April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Now that the majority of the Featured Authors have been identified Robin and Gail will start looking into the "niche communities" and place advertisements in their publications and newsletters.

It was suggested that the City create a short promo video advertising the Book Festival. This could be used for television and social media advertising. Carolyn took this for action.

World Book Day – World Book Day is Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> and is a day when hundreds of donated books are distributed to people at random. The Book Festival has secured 400 books for distribution and will have committee members in key areas around the City distributing books with Book Festival Postcards. Stephanie, Jennifer and Gene are coordinating this event and many Committee Members said they would like to assist with distributing the books. This event encourages people to read and will hopefully encourage them to come to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Book Festival.

Gaithersburg Book Festival Survey – Laura Burns asked if the Committee would review the 2011 Survey and provide updates as required.

### Reminders

Next meeting will be **Thursday, March 15, 2012** at Bohrer Park Activity Center

### **III. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Sheila Bouley  
Gaithersburg Book Festival Program Assistant